UNCLASSIFIED [redacted] 9/5/79

Department of State

INCOMING TELEGRAM

PAGE 01 BUENOS 07288 051645Z 1127
ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 ICAE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00
PA-01 INC-01 SP-02 SS-15 HA-05 /059 W
------------------058249 051656Z /47

O 051544Z SEP 79
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2245

[redacted] BUENOS AIRES 7288

E.O. 12065: GDS 9/5/85 (FRIEDMAN, TOWNSEND B.) OR-P
TAGS: OVIP SHUM AR US
SUBJ: (U) WIESEL DOES NOT SEE TIMERMAN

REF: BUENOS AIRES 7262

1. [redacted] - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. ELI WIESEL LEFT BUENOS AIRES WITHOUT SEEING JACOBO TIMERMAN, DESPITE ARMY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF GENERAL VIOLA'S AUTHORIZATION TO THE AMBASSADOR OF SUCH A VISIT (REFTEL). GENERAL VIOLA'S AUTHORIZATION WAS FOLLOWED BY A PHONE CALL TO THE AMBASSADOR FROM ARMY SECRETARY GENERAL BIGNONE, WHO PARTICIPATED IN PART OF THE MEETING BETWEEN VIOLA AND THE AMBASSADOR, STATING THAT THE VISIT HAD BEEN SET UP AND ALL THE EMBASSY HAD TO DO WAS TO CONTACT THE INTERIOR MINISTRY TO MAKE FINAL ARRANGEMENTS. (TIMERMAN'S HOUSE ARREST IS SUPERVISED BY THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR.) THE EMBASSY TRIED REPEATEDLY TO CONTACT COL. RUIZ PALACIOS, DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERIOR, WHOSE SECRETARY INFORMED HIM OF THE PURPOSE OF OUR CALL. COL. PALACIOS WAS "OUT" OR "IN A MEETING" AND NEVER RETURNED OUR CALLS. SIMILARLY WE ATTEMPTED TO SPEAK WITH COL. SAN ROMAN, A FREQUENT INTERIOR MINISTRY CONTACT AND MEMBER OF RUIZ PALACIOS' STAFF. SAN ROMAN WAS ALSO OUT AND NEVER RETURNED OUR PHONE CALLS. FINALLY, WE TRIED TO SPEAK WITH INTERIOR MINISTER HARGUINDEGUY WHO WAS OUT OF TOWN. WHEN IT APPEARED THAT WE WERE GOING TO HAVE TROUBLE COMPLETING ARRANGEMENTS WE AGAIN CONTACTED GENERAL BIGNONE AND WERE TOLD ONCE AGAIN ALL HAD BEEN ARRANGED AND ALL WE HAD TO DO WAS CONTACT THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR. IN THE END WIESEL, WHO WAS AWARE OF OUR EFFORTS IN HAS BEHALF, LEFT TOWN DISAPPOINTED AND ANGERED BY THIS DEVELOPMENT.

3. COMMENT: THERE ARE THREE POSSIBLE BROAD EXPLANATIONS OF THIS PERFORMANCE BY THE GOA:
(A) A BUREAUCRATIC SNAFU;
(B) MINISTER HARGUINDEGUY, WHO ORIGINALLY DENIED WIESEL'S REQUEST TO VISIT TIMERMAN, OBSTRUCTED VIOLA'S ATTEMPT TO OVERRULE HIM;
(C) THERE WAS SOME SORT OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN VIOLA AND HARGUINDEGUY WHICH AUTHORIZED THE MINISTER AND HIS SUBORDINATES TO PROCEED EXACTLY AS THEY DID.
THE FIRST EXPLANATION SEEMS TO US IMPLAUSIBLE IN THIS CASE, THOUGH IT MAY BE THE ONE EVENTUALLY HEARD FROM THE GOA. THE OTHER TWO SCENARIOS ARE PLAUSIBLE BUT IT WOULD SIMPLY BE GUESS-WORK TO SAY WHICH MORE CLOSELY CORRESPONDS TO EVENTS.

4. WIESEL TOLD THE PRESS ON DEPARTING BUENOS AIRES THAT HE WOULD BE MAKING A FULL STATEMENT ABOUT THIS ABORTED INTERVIEW IN NEW YORK. IF THE DEPARTMENT IS QUERIED ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENTS OUTLINED ABOVE RECOMMEND THAT IT CONFIRM EMBASSY EFFORTS TO ARRANGE THE WIESEL/TIMERMAN INTERVIEW BUT STATE THAT WE WERE UNABLE TO COMPLETE FINAL ARRANGEMENTS.
CASTRO

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S20000044)
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS
Margaret P. Grafeld, Director
(+) Release () Excise () Deny
Exemption(s): _____
Declassify: () In Part (+) In Full
() Classify as ___ () Extend as ___ () Downgrade to ___
Date _____ Declassify on _____ Reason ____

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S2D103
Box 17404